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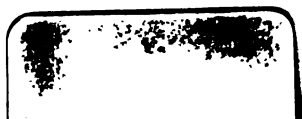
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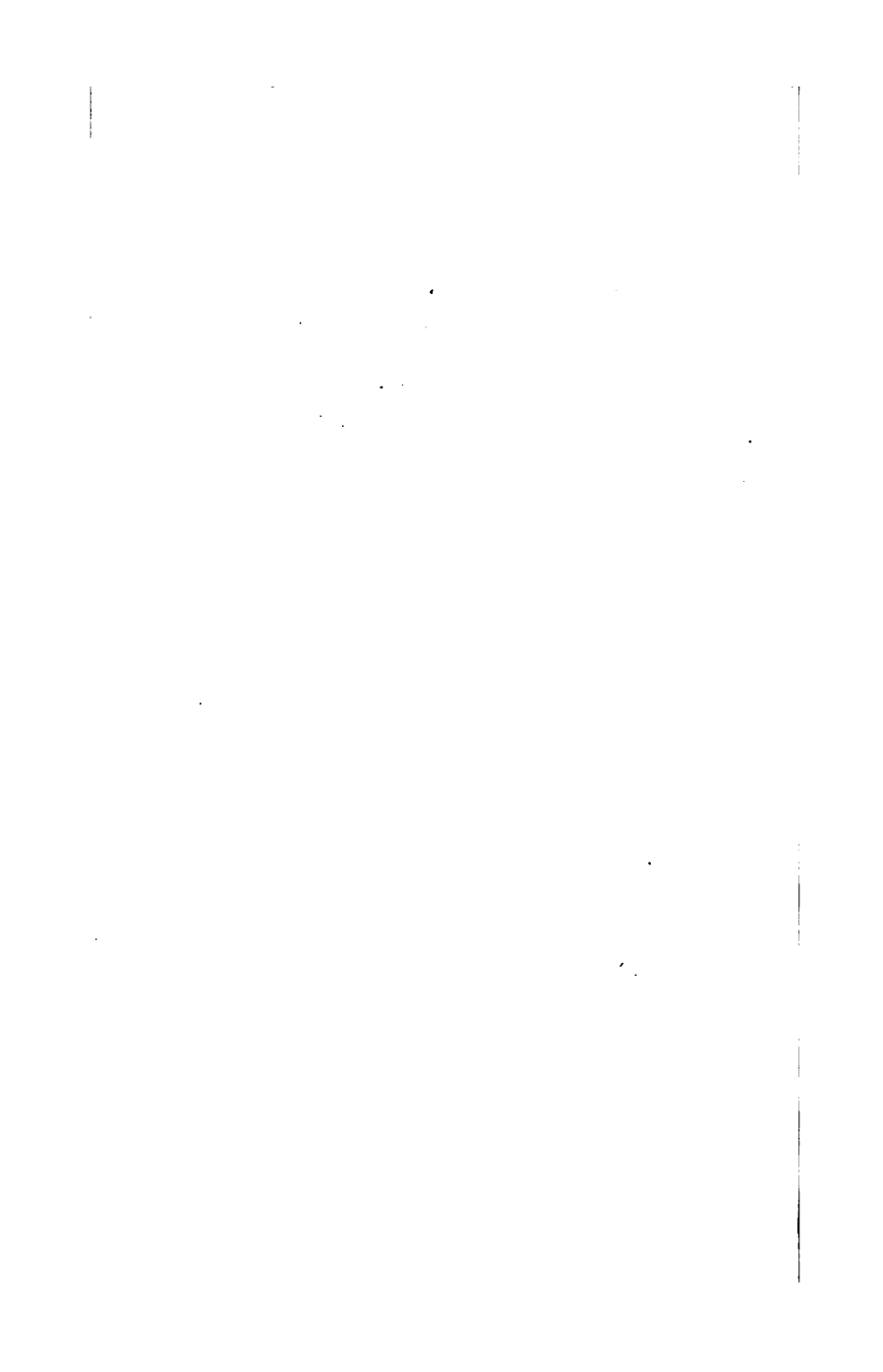
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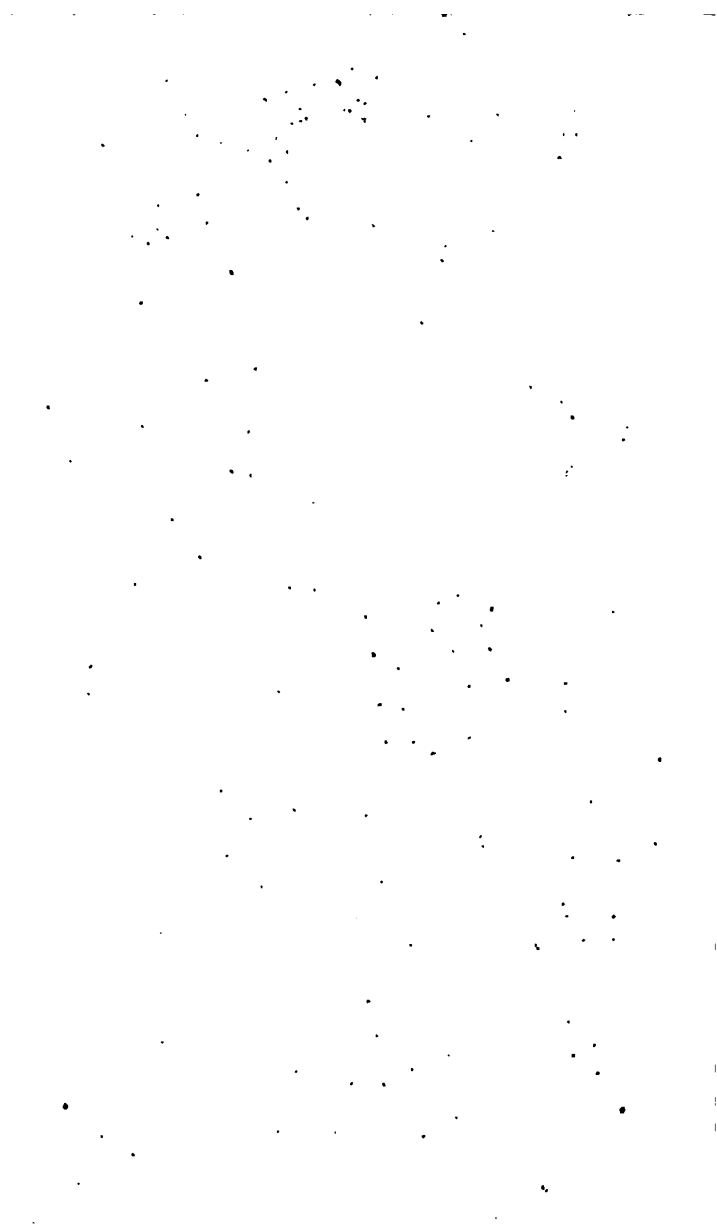








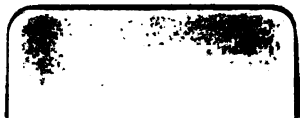




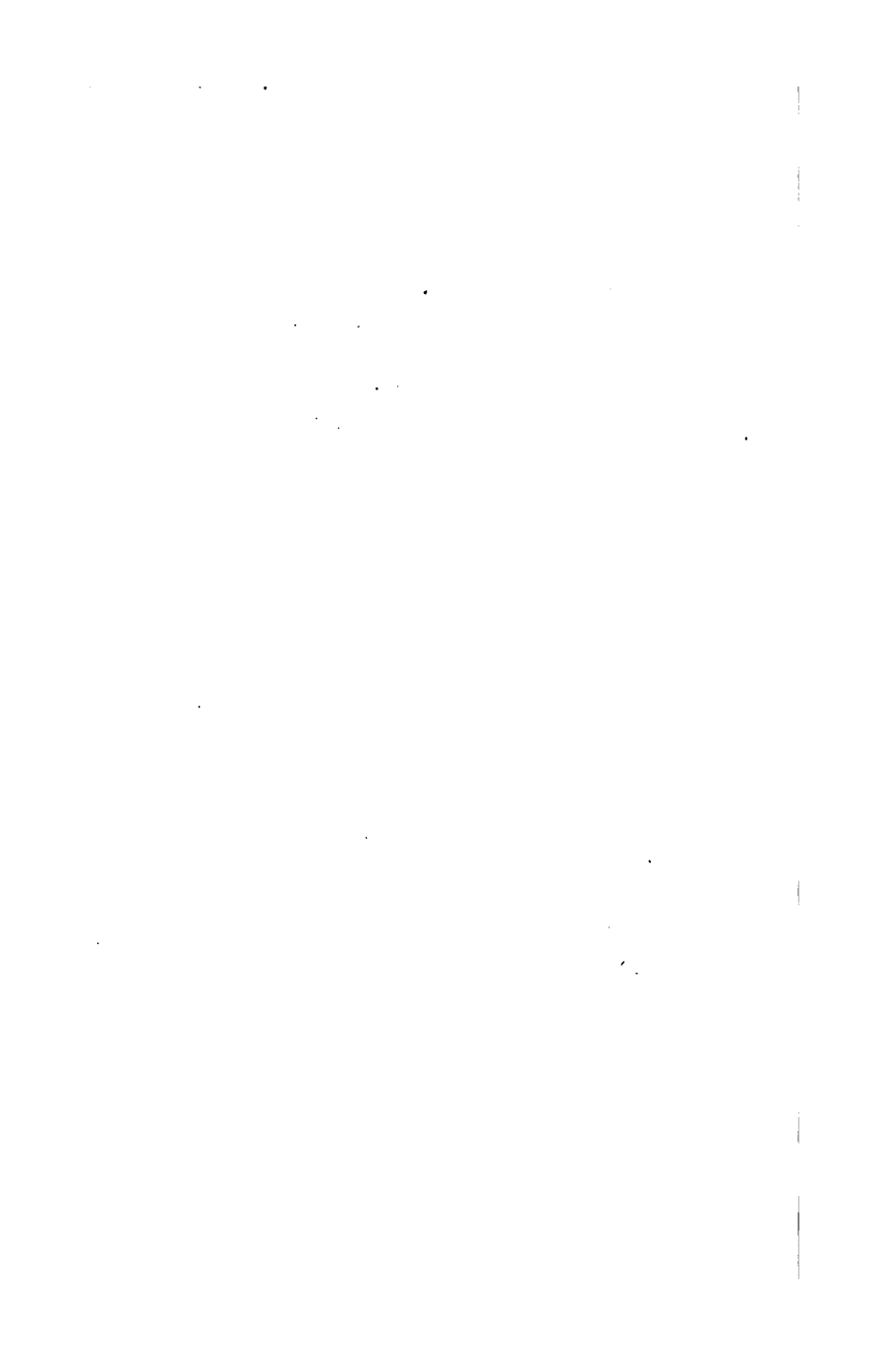


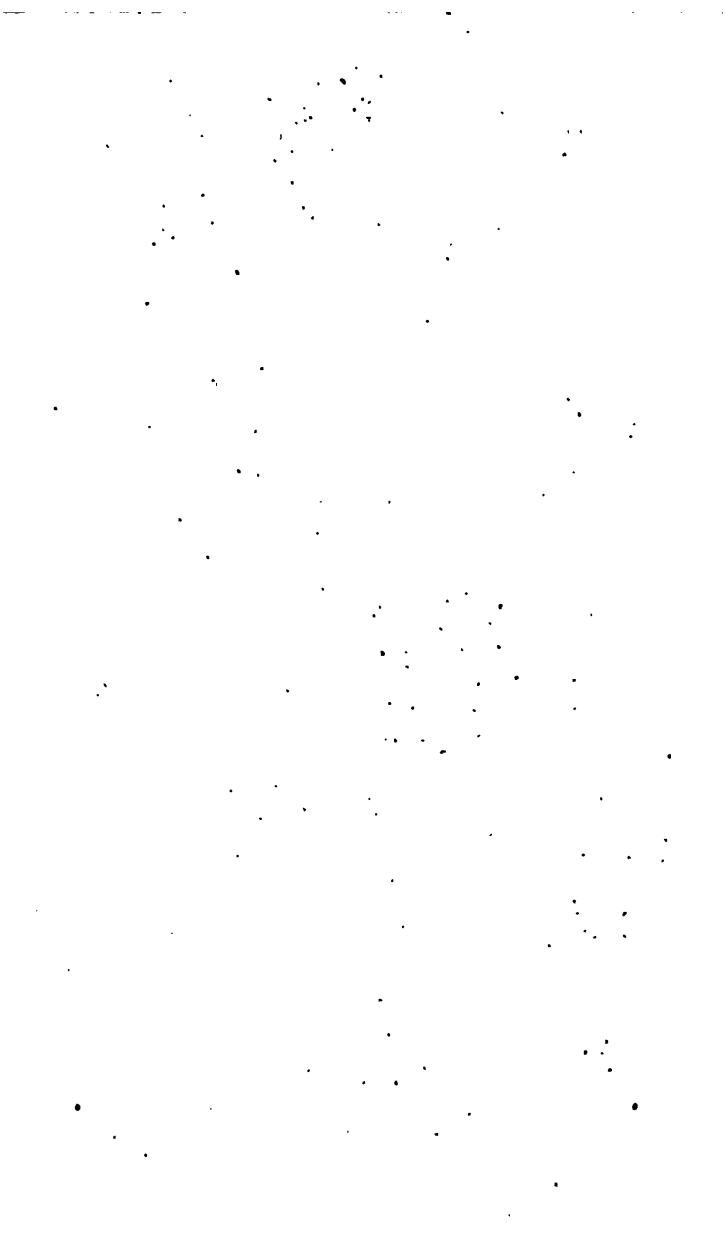


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# THE AUBURN

A POEM

IN FOUR BOOKS

BY  
THE AUTHOR OF "THE AUBURN"

LONDON:  
WILLIAM AND JOHN BARNES  
STATIONERS

280. 7. 28.



THE AUTHOR:

A POEM,

IN FOUR BOOKS.

"I am altogether uncertain, whether to look upon myself as a man building  
a monument or burying the dead"—POPE'S PREFACE TO HIS POEMS.



LONDON :

WILLIAM ALLAN, 13, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLIV.

280. H. 28.





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# THE AUTHOR.

## BOOK I.

"Whatever of beautiful, instructive, or alluring belongs to Philosophy, History, or Fiction is wrapped up in Poetry. It sets the hardest lessons to music."

—WILMOTT'S PLEASURES OF LITERATURE.

"We demand from a new book something to be found nowhere else, and something worth knowing. If the author cannot do this, it were better to throw down his pen."

—SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

"Literature is only valuable for the intrinsic powers it confers, and the sound wisdom it teaches. Its factions, its manœuvres, its tricks of temporary distinction, its traps of popularity, are still more despicable, than in the affairs of life, because they come from a quarter which affects to be the school of knowledge and morality.—IBID.

"There is perhaps nothing which more enlarges or enriches the mind, than the disposition to lay it genially open to impressions of pleasure from the exercise of every species of talent; nothing by which it is more impoverished than the habit of undue depreciation. What is puerile, pusillanimous, or wicked, it can do us no good to admire; but let us admire all that can be admired without debasing the dispositions or stultifying the understanding."

—HENRY TAYLOR.

# THE AUTHOR.

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"A little architect in all his schemes ;  
Some say he had a method in his dreams."  
PURSUITS OF LITERATURE.

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## BOOK I.

### I.

A MORAL edifice I fain would build,  
If for the task I were but rightly skill'd,  
Nor richer quarry can my mind descry  
Than this my theme, for busy thought to ply.  
Oh, with the will, could I the power command, 5  
Timber'd with truth, this edifice should stand!



## II.

Aid, Contemplation, as my thoughts aspire,  
Burn bright within me, pure authentic fire!  
As through the verdant fields I musing rove,  
Awake to beauty, melody, and love ; 10  
Or should I choose, at gently falling eve,  
Imagination's airy web to weave,  
My warp and woof fantastic, let me throw  
Across the frame which poets only know,  
Till wove complete, the poet's dream appears, 15  
A vision for an after-flood of years.

And now, at midnight's still, impressive hour,  
I court thy mild, insinuating power,  
To stir each dormant thought, and fire the mind  
With images of truth, by taste refined, 20

The beautiful and grand in Fancy's eye,  
With Reason's native force and majesty.  
All this I need,—from thee the gift I ask ;  
Smile, Power propitious, on thy suppliant's task.

## III.

But to my theme. An Author, what is he ? 25  
His habits, feelings, and society ?  
—See yonder mortal pacing too and fro,  
With easy step, and thoughtfulness of brow :  
With eyes now sparkling, then anon serene,  
As dawn upon his view the things unseen. 30  
He halts—and with his pen or pencil notes  
The ready current of his flowing thoughts ;  
And now, with eyes uprais'd, he mutters o'er  
Some passage writ the moment just before,

And with nice ear attuned, detects each flaw, 35  
Should any such offend the critic's law,—  
Expunges or supplies as need demands,  
And drops the polished period from his hands.

## IV.

His study is no narrow-bounded spot ;  
'Tis the wide world—the palace or the cot, 40  
By mountain shade, or on the desert plain,  
The silent glen, or by the sounding main,  
No matter where,—'neath the cerulean sky,—  
His thoughts expand and on free pinions fly.  
Oft times, an attic is his loved retreat, 45  
Where jarring sounds and tumults never meet,  
Lined 'round with shelves, that bear the fruits  
Well chosen books, a consecrated store: [of yore,—

Or, should lean poverty withhold so much,  
And grasp him rudely with relentless clutch, 50  
His bounding spirit scorns material bars,  
And stronger seems the more obstruction wars.

## V.

His feelings are his own,—his hopes and fears,  
Which pierce the vista of succeeding years,  
With thrilling wish to leave a name behind, 55  
Bright as a gem, immortal as the mind.  
As changes play o'er April's flitting skies,  
What various aspects pass before his eyes !  
Now, seems life's prospect gloomy without end,  
Perchance unsooth'd by sympathetic friend,— 60  
Pale want and scorn, as serpents, point their stings,  
And, cruel, hiss his dear imaginings ;

Or, flutt'ring with gay hopes, his wings are bright,  
And to his vision glisten as the light,—  
He feels within a wonder-working power, 65  
Which hold's him buoyant for the passing hour,  
Such the horizon of an author's mind,—  
Now light, now shade, now smiling, now unkind.

## VI.

He is not read at once by passers by :  
The multitude pronounce him far too shy,— 70  
(Unfit, forsooth, to cuff the storms of life,  
He ranks a cipher in its venal strife).  
Mid strangers, oft a quiet musing man,  
He talks but little, gathers where he can ;  
Observant, sees,—and notes each sage reply, 75  
And still looks grave while wittings flutter by.

Anon, his face enkindles, and a smile  
Plays like the sunlight on a mountain pile ;  
Some latent fibre of the subtle mind  
Hath trembled to the spirit of the wind,        80  
Hath stirr'd emotions elevate, sublime,—  
Abstracted else,—he takes no note of time.

Yet none will show a greater joy than he,  
When reason gladdens gay hilarity.  
See him at home, with some congenial soul,    85  
When freed from modish fetters of control,  
Of men and things, and lit'ature and lore,  
How fresh the stream continuously doth pour ?  
A well of wisdom in his breast appears,  
Grateful as dew, when morning smiles in tears ! 90

## VII.

Time was, when thoughts evanish'd as they rose,  
Unchronicled, by either verse or prose :  
Like fragrance wafted on the lightsome breeze,  
They fled the hand which would their spirit seize.  
'Tis true, tradition held a partial sway,— 95  
And minstrels sang their simple-hearted lay,—  
Of love and war, and ever changing life,  
Yet e'en tradition perished in the strife.  
But, Providence ordained, and mystic signs  
Became th' exponent of its vast designs. 100  
Lo, in the desert rising from the sands,  
A monumental mountain proudly stands :  
Eventful pile ! 'tis Sinai's awful steep,  
No longer warded by the lightning's sweep,

Or girt with thunder, or with smoke opprest, 105  
 Portending vengeance by its heaving breast.  
 Historic pens assume that yonder height,  
 First on this earth, beheld a lettered sight,  
 —Those signs symbolic of the inner thought,  
 In God's commandments by His finger wrote. 110  
 So with the code of human conduct giv'n,  
 Prophetic glanced the author's call from Heav'n ;  
 And scrolls and books hence started from the pen,  
 An intercourse till now unknown to men !

VIII.

The aspirations of the thoughtful mind 115  
 Are hidden, as the birth-place of the wind,  
 Until revealed ; nor wonder, ere they write,  
 That authors hug their wishes out of sight.



Few heroes bold have torn the veil away,  
And shewn mankind what struggles inly prey 120  
In such as nurse the enterprising thought  
Of writing books, which may be read or not.  
Such would supply a theme of stirring tone  
For sage or poet to comment upon.  
Methinks had I the power, that I would trace 125  
Each author's impulse to its starting place—  
And why not now, attempt the daring feat,  
And draw the secret from its still retreat ?  
One truthful thought will palliation find  
With ev'ry lover of ingenuous mind. 130  
This be my plea—as I pursue the theme,  
And fill the vacuum of my wakeful dream.

## IX.

The infant genius in the thoughtful boy,  
Will sip at learning's well, where others cloy,  
And, as imagination prompts his taste, 135  
Will drink Castalian dew where others waste,  
From tree or flower, mountain or stretching plain,  
Nor let the sweets evaporate in vain.  
'Tis true, he knows not that within his breast  
A giant force is waking, ill at rest, 140  
As some poor bird, entrammel'd by a string,  
Will struggle for escape; yet soon he'll fling  
His bonds disdainful, as but mocking chains,  
And laugh at that which now his might constrains.  
At length surprised—he feels the restless spell, 145  
With force unfelt before, his thoughts impel

To energy sublime,—and straight a book  
Invites the critic reader to a look :  
—Thus fairly launched upon the fitful stream  
Of current fame—the book may sink or swim ! 150

## X.

“’Tis pleasant sure to see one’s name in print ;  
A book’s a book altho’ there’s nothing in’t !” \*  
This pleasant thought has doubtless been the spell  
Of many who have wisely writ,—and well.  
Improving thus a momentary whim, 155  
They’ve sculptured thought to symmetry of limb,  
And from a dull material, worthless deem’d,  
Have chissell’d beauty, where ’twas never dream’d !

\* Byron.

## XI.

Yet must not genius vauntingly aspire  
All fame to grasp within its hand of fire 160  
As merit's meed. As in the solar sphere,  
Though but one sun, innum'rous lights appear  
To deck ethereal space,—and stars the least  
Do shine as stars, and will the vision feast.  
—If so above, sure lights may shine below, 165  
Nor shine the less by contrast in their show ;  
Nor in the world of letters wants there space  
For ev'ry class of merit,—mind to grace.

Some authors have not genius, yet have art  
To make a book, amusement to impart 170  
By compilation's skill ; such are of use,  
Who snatch the present moment from abuse.

Others, with rarer force of mind endowed,  
In argument excel ; they hate all cloud  
Of sophistry, and penetrate their way,        175  
Through error's lab'rinth to the light of day :  
—These when enlisted in some worthy cause,  
Bespeak the homage of mankind's applause.

## XII.

See there, the bold and philosophic sage    180  
Essays to grasp the wisdom of an age,  
Revolving in his mind some mighty plan  
Which binds all ages in the weal of man.  
His comprehensive ken past time surveys,  
Notes mind evolving in a thousand ways,  
As int'rest wav'ring leads, or crushing power 185  
With thund'ring hoofs, may triumph for the hour.

As one who stands on elevated ground,  
Reflective, ponders on the scene around,  
Is eager, in his philosophic mind,  
To gather science—seeds of truth to find,     190  
So he,—intent in musings deep and high,  
Culls wisdom from the page of History.

## XIII.

The pious bard whose uncorrupted pen  
Writes less for fame than for the good of men,  
Let all revere. His patriotic mind     195  
Yearns for the bliss that blesses all mankind.  
He lives not to himself, but for his race,  
Warm'd by the flame of God's inspiring grace.  
Search the interior of his mental frame,     [200  
The windings of each thought—his final aim—

The whole compacted ravishes the eye,—  
A human mind aspiring to the sky !  
Closer the picture scan :—how love refines !  
Each fervent word in crystal-clearness shines :  
Tribute he gathers from surrounding mind, 205  
With nature talks,—sky, ocean, and the wind :  
Her landscapes, glowing in the vernal sun,  
To him, with streams of varied knowledge run,  
—These, to his mind, with scripture learning fraught  
Rich aliment supply for pious thought ; 210  
Whence, with the banquet fed, the man aspires,  
To give expression to his large desires,  
Nor rests, till graven by his pen be giv'n,  
Some worthy book which points mankind to heav'n.

## XIV.

The critics next advance,—a swarming tribe :  
Yet who may dare the species to describe ? [215  
Those mighty wielders of the paper sword,  
Who move opinion by their potent word !  
Yet let not slander desecrate the name ;  
Critics there are, who will the truth proclaim 220  
Unshackled by a bribe,—who neither know  
Nor care who rules in Paternoster Row.  
I ask their pardon, 'tis for them to choose  
Whom they shall get to write in their reviews,  
And, to decree what authors shall be praised, 225  
And who, forsooth, deserves to be debased !  
Since publishers should live as well as he  
Who scrawls, and thinks to live eternally ;



The argument runs thus, as we suppose :—  
The tradesman in his conscience, cannot lose ;  
'Tis scarcely fair, when copy-right is bought, [230  
That all the money should be spent for naught ;  
Hence, thus the strain, to him who writes for pay,  
“ Write you for me, yet write as I shall say,  
Critiques I need, my copy-right to raise,      235  
—No matter what you think—you know who pays.”  
Thus bargains oft are struck to fill reviews,  
As money'd publishers discreetly choose.  
Critics stand forth ! ye multifarious clan,  
And first and foremost stand the honest man—  
Where is he ? aye, Diogenes may ask,      [240  
So seldom is he found who wears no mask.

## XV.

Unveil that dark recess of hidden spleen  
The hypercritic's breast,—survey unseen  
The pictures,—how they hang on all sides round,  
Vivid as light'ning in the dark profound : [245  
Motives how curious to the mental view,  
Each, one and all are selfish in their hue ;  
Envy and malice dip their pens in gall,  
Exulting much to see a hero fall, 250  
And flattery is bland to win a smile,  
—Haply it seeks some favour to beguile—  
Obsequious most to such as have a name,  
—That chosen footstep to a niche of fame.  
Yet stay;—rude elf—too far thy boldness pries ;  
Such things were never meant for vulgar eyes. [255

## XVI.

Hail to the critic who deserves the name :  
Who, nobly free from mercenary blame,  
Wields fairly his adjudicating quill ;  
Whom knowledge guides, and not the tyrant will.  
Skill'd in his art, his penetration sees [260  
Taste's nice adjustments and dependencies ;  
Whilst judgement hangs severely on his brow,  
Scathing the sophist without word or blow :  
—And none more kindly will bestow a smile 265  
When merit meekly sues, unmixed with guile :  
—Thus, in his rightful sphere the critic shines,  
A prompter of the pen to great designs !

## XVII.

'Twere shame to think the acme e'er attained  
In art or science,—as 'tis often feigned— 270

Or yet in mind :\* like the horizon's span  
 The more pursued, the more it flees from man.  
 Does not the mind, observant, recognise  
 Progression's law, in nature never dies ?  
 And shall the soul lose her expansive force, 275  
 Whilst passive matter still retains its course !  
 The thought were rash,—as if a spark divine  
 Should lose its light—and grosser matter shine !

XVIII.

Away contracted thought, which would confine  
 The flight of genius by a measured line : 280  
 Expansion still expands before his eye  
 Who climbs the mountain peering to the sky,—  
 So, genius, tow'ring in its upward flight  
 Becomes all vision, drinking in the light,

\* See Appendix, Note A. by S. Bailey, Esq.

And darts at will her concentrated beams 285

To gild a thousand visionary schemes.

Her angel voice, sweet-warbling in the air,

Inspires the feeble and confronts despair,

For as she woos, the difficult retires

And resolution all the hero fires ! 290

'Tis not, as Alexander once believed,

That glory's climax is at length achieved :

New trophies still await the warrior brave,

Whose prowess will not let him be a slave,

—And soldiers of the pen may yet arise, 295

Whose fam'd exploits shall force a world's surprise.

XIX.

To climb "the steep of Fame" was ever hard

To grave philosopher, or musing bard ;

And time advancing will increase the toil,  
As candidates increase upon the soil.—\* 300  
Who then may hope the summit to attain,  
Where hosts must fail ? time only can explain.  
Still there is room new energies to ply ;  
Untrodden realms await the mental eye,—  
A world of problems still remain involved, 305  
To conquer these, let sages be resolved ;  
High themes undreamt of yet remain unsung—  
To these, ye poets, let your lyres be strung ;  
And clad in conscious virtue, ye shall wear  
Illustrious honours—permanent and fair. 310

## XX.

“ Oh for a trumpet voice” to wake the age,  
To quicken, rouse, and ev’ry breast engage,—

\* See Note B. by T. B. Browne, Esq.

With high invention fraught, and magic skill,  
To prompt a nation's energy at will :  
With more than Shakespeare's wit, or Bacon's  
sense, 315  
Or Spenser's fancy,—Chatham's eloquence.  
A moral Orpheus whose enchanting lyre,  
Shall soothe, attract, and kindle virtue's fire !  
Too pure for vice, such instrument of song  
Would grace a poet's or a seraph's tongue ! 320

# THE AUTHOR.

## BOOK II.



"He in the mean time had wandered long in search of some enterprise, till at length he arrived at a small rivulet that issued hard by, called in the language of mortal men Helicon : here he stopt, and parched with thirst resolved to allay it in this limpid stream."—BATTLE OF THE BOOKS.

"The *Mahumetans* say, that the *first thing that God created was a Pen* ; indeed the whole creation is but a *Transcript*. And God when he made the world did but write it out of that *Copy* which he had of it in divine understanding from all *Eternity*. The *Lesser worlds* or *men* are but the *Transcripts* of the *Greater*, as *Children* and *Bookes* the Copies of *themselves*."—AN OLD WRITER, 1650.

# THE AUTHOR.

---

—“ To these emotions, whencesoe’er they come,  
Whether from breath of outward circumstance,  
Or from the soul, an impulse to itself,  
I would give utterance in numerous verse.”  
WORDSWORTH.

---

## BOOK II.

### I.

The curious ever feel sublime delight  
In catching what eludes the vulgar sight.  
'Tis pleasant to descry the fountain spring  
Of some vast river, in its wandering :  
'Tis pleasant to behold morn's earliest ray,      5  
The first faint streak that ushers in the day :

The florist thrills with rapture in the hour  
He spies his seedling bursting into flower :  
Nor less, the curious muse exults to find  
The secret impulse of an author's mind. \* 10

## II.

I knew a wight whose mental history  
With storied-life was full—an author he ;  
Oft from his earliest years he ran it o'er  
Whilst I attentive listened to his lore.  
The mind was all the man : no pompous glare 15  
Of high adornment did his language wear.  
The narrative I loved, and strove to gain  
What fittingly reanimates my strain.

\* See Note C. from Edgar Allan Poe, the American.

## III.

Within a city, whose high battlement  
From ancient times had stood, his youth was spent;  
Spent boyishly—nor careful thoughts had he, [20  
To pass the bounds of his obscurity.  
In tops or marbles, or the wingèd kite,  
His fancy found an exquisite delight :  
Now, furnished with his mimic tools he'd be 25  
The hero of a work of carpentry ;  
Or now, encircled by his stools and chairs,  
See him a merchant vending precious wares.  
Thus ever as new sights his vision caught,  
Fresh impulse came for imitative thought. 30  
Such were his school-boy days—a child of play,  
He shunned his books, and loved a holiday.

From school now freed his opening mind began  
To emulate the dignity of man :  
A stranger to himself,—the world within,      35  
Was yet untravell'd—that without, unseen.  
Till now his mind had slept ; nor did he know  
Thought's hidden fountain was about to flow.

## IV.

How first the quicken'd fancy moved his breast,  
To contemplation,—and his mind's unrest,      40  
And how the sense of mental taste refined,  
Sprang up a new existence in his mind,  
With love of knowledge,—these I would rehearse  
In the still eloquence of truthful verse.  
Once on a summer's day, by heat oppress'd,      45  
Down on the grass he laid himself to rest,

And opening now his wonder-smitten eye,  
His thoughts began to travel through the sky.  
It seemed a trance—as though that grandeur then  
Had first alighted on his conscious brain. 50  
Anon, etherial-winged, he soared sublime,  
And hover'd o'er the mazy gulf of Time,  
And heard the cataract of ages roar  
O'er dark infinitude—without a shore.  
The drama of existence met his eyes, 55  
And seemed to speak of future destinies.  
Thus as the vision rose before his soul,  
Life's thousand pulses beat without control ;  
'Twas young Conception's birth—the signal hour,  
When first his spirit felt poetic power. 60

## V.

From hence we trace another history  
In the same mind—so greatly change was he,  
The epoch had arrived from whence he seemed  
Within himself, to be the thing he dreamed ;  
The musing faculty was so possest, 65  
It was his meat and drink, his toil and rest.  
He grew inquisitive, and eager sought  
To trace the very fountain-springs of thought,  
By all he saw, felt, heard. His inner sense  
Craved increase still, of high intelligence. 70

## VI.

How should such fervid thought not reproduce  
Its like,—as sterling seeds themselves diffuse ?  
It did : a book aroused the fond desire  
To emulate some fav'rite author's fire.

It seemed an easy task and promised fame 75

To write a book and propagate his name,

He thought, and once resolved, he seized the pen,

“That mighty instrument of little men.” \*

The effort failed—for thought, alas, had fled

In the delirium which his fancies bred. 80

So fared his first attempt :—yet not confined,

Or stunted, is the genius of the mind,

Nor quenched with ease the youthful soul of fire,

When noble aims, with noble means conspire, †

He felt—and hope with radiant promise smiled,

On the proud wishes of her ardent child. [85

As one on some advent'rous voyage bent,

Watches all changes in the firmament,

\* Byron.

† “Who noble ends by noble means obtains.”—*Pope*.



Intent to seize each fav'ring wind and tide,  
He resolutely strove, fresh methods tried, 90  
Not wav'ringly, but with undaunted breast,  
Thus with new purpose he his powers address  
His efforts to renew—resolved to shine,  
The famous author of a work *divine*!

## VII.

What plans he took to compass his designs, 95  
Demand expression in poetic lines.  
Oh would that I could give them, and infuse  
Becoming rapture through the glowing muse :  
Adventure only wins : here let me try  
On Pegasus, to mount the poet's sky ! 100  
'Twas in that quarter of the shifting year,  
When Sol less brightly lights the hemisphere,

When fitful Winter shakes his hoary brows,  
And flings o'er nature uncorrupted snows—  
'Twas then, mysteriously, his spirit caught 105  
Intensity of feeling and of thought.

Nor yet revealed exact, the scene, the hour,  
Which wrought enchantment on each latent power.  
'Twas Night,\* when over-head the clear blue sky,  
Deck'd with the moon and stars, shone gloriously:—  
With light th' unbounded ether seemed to glow,  
And all was peaceful in wide space below.  
On such a night it was:—our student wooed  
By nature's charms, felt inspiration's mood,  
And found himself the master of a theme 115  
Befitting his proud wish—a poet's dream.

\* See Appendix, Note D, from John Foster.

## VIII.

Yet, who would struggle in this business age,  
To win a poet's doubtful patronage ?  
The calling lacks the current stamp of worth,  
'Tis out of date—a nullity on earth.       120  
It makes no traffic, springs no golden mine ;  
And, to the sordid, gold alone will shine.  
“ Then own, the world's arithmetic is true,  
And say, he's wise who bids the muse adieu.”  
The tyro hears—too timid to complain,       125  
Yet smiles and weeps his ardour to restrain !

## IX.

Whate'er betides, enthusiasm braves,  
And rises buoyant o'er opposing waves ;  
So with our hero—boldly he designed,       [130  
And nerved his spirit 'gainst the tide and wind.

Briefly is told the rest :—his purposed aim  
Grew dominant, to win a poets name :  
He looked at all things with a poet's eye,  
All natures sounds to him were melody.  
It seemed an instinct which he now possest, 135  
To rhyme and muse, and musing to be blest.  
Nor unforgot his toils : by night, by day,  
He culled new thoughts to dignify his lay.  
Much he perused the masters of the lyre,  
And often sighed to emulate their fire : 140  
As often felt dismayed—yet truth must tell,  
Hope soon revived him with her magic spell.

## X.

The tide of inspiration ebbs and flows,  
All writers feel, —but chief the poet knows.

'Twas so with him ;—deserted by the Nine, 145  
Whole months would pass without a written line:  
And now perchance, so full the soul would be,  
His streaming thoughts came flowing as the sea ;  
Wave after wave pursuing,—happy then,  
The lines glide smoothly from his ready pen. 150  
Devoted minstrel ! now, with ardent fire,  
He strikes harmonious numbers from his lyre ;  
Fastidious more, the more he strikes the strings,  
To give the tones of his imaginings  
Their faithful echoes : soft or loud are they, 155  
As passions stir within, or fancies play.  
The crisis urges on—with trembling hand  
He writes the final period : from the strand,

.

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Launches his paper bark,—with what success,  
Time must alone reveal—I may not guess! 160

## XI.

Arduous indeed it is, for those who write,  
And cater for the public appetite.  
More arduous still, that appetite to please,  
Which lives on change, as fitful as the breeze.  
Yet 'tis the common dream of scribbling wights;  
For this they dedicate their days and nights! [165

## XII.

Delicious moment, when his fancy sees  
Long cherished hopes as gay realities.  
The time arrived, when finished from his pen,  
His secret labours meet the eyes of men, 170  
When homage from the wise shall be bestowed  
As but his due,—as something that is owed

To patient labour, persevering thought,  
Seen in the product which his mind hath wrought.  
Too sanguine scribe ! count not on such delight, 175  
What flatt'ring hopes delude the men who write !  
Think of the' immortal sages of the past,  
Those giant-souls whose written labours last.  
Their bosoms panted throbbingly as yours,  
To snatch the fame which intellect procures; 180  
They yearn'd to grasp contemporary fame,  
The earnest of their after-blazoned name;  
And fairly had they earned their bright renown,  
By mighty efforts—ere their sun went down.  
Did Shakespeare, with his universal mind, 185  
Receive at once the homage of mankind ?

Did Milton, prince of poets, gain the prize,  
Worthy his strain,\*—the loss of Paradise ?  
Such was delayed,—and years of dullness roll,  
Till dawns an after-age of more poetic soul ! 190

## XIII.

Meanwhile the hapless visionary sees,  
Unnumbered ghosts of cross-contingences,  
Which meet him on his path. He knows too well,  
The mind will oft against the will rebel,—  
And his may prove a desert wild and dry, 195  
A wilderness from whence he cannot fly.  
Or, should his mind like some well-watered isle,  
Verdant with promise, efflorescent smile ;  
Still, verdure may be visited with blight, [200  
As flowers will shrink beneath the scorching light.

\* See Appendix, Note E.



Too sensitive, perhaps, he cannot brook  
The with'ring glances of a scornful look ;  
The flippant tongue his struggles may deride,  
And pour contempt upon his lettered pride ;  
Or health may fail,—or madness may pursue 205  
His thought o'er strained—yea death itself accrue.  
Such are the ghostly fears, and such his strife,  
Who dares the perils of an author's life !\*

## XIV.

'Mid hills and streams and desert wastes remote,  
A stripling poet rear'd his youthful thought : 210  
Communing with himself, his inmost mind,  
Was sensitive to ev'ry passing wind ;  
All to his ears replete with wisdom spoke,  
And seemed a crowd of spirits to evoke.

\* See Appendix, Note F.

He mused upon the past, on books and men, 215  
And as he mused, he sighed to wield the pen,  
“And with old bards of honourable name” \*  
Soared in his wish to compass equal fame ;  
His hands advent’rous seized the golden lyre,—  
The thrilling strings awoke to notes of fire,—220  
Or, gentler moved, such tender notes were given  
As when light zephyrs breathe the lute of Heaven.  
“Oh who can tell what days, what nights he spent” \*  
To reach the harmony his spirit meant !  
Lamented youth ! he little dreamt the cost 225  
Of such aspirings—earthly comforts lost ;  
A mind well nigh consumed with burning thought ;  
A frame robust to pallid languor brought.

\* Course of Time. † Ibid.

Too early off'ring, at the shrine of death,  
He pined and wasted, then exhaled his breath! 230  
—Such was the bard who sang the "Course of Time,"  
The youthful Pollok,\* born in Scotia's clime.  
Adown Time's stream his harp will long survive,  
Long as fair Poesy herself shall live :  
Though fraught with strains unequal, pity spares  
The hopeful genius fanned by mountain airs! [235

## xv.

By prose or verse, the hero of the quill  
Enchains his thought, subservient to his will ;  
Nor scorn his pastime,—when his ready pen  
Runs with his thoughts a healthy flowing vein, 240  
On some high subject which his breast inspires,  
The toil of years,—and crown of his desires.

\* See Note G. from D. M. Moir, "Delta."

Such Bunyan knew, when musing on his theme,  
His soaring pen rehearsed a deathless dream,—  
Such is the bliss which ev'ry artist knows,   245  
As the fair picture from his pencil glows !

## XVI.

A well writ book implies some master soul :  
—A mind well schooled by resolute control.  
The progress I would sketch—if such a theme,  
Be not too subtle for a waking dream.       250  
At first,—the thoughts in wild chaotic mass,  
Through cloudy chambers in confusion pass,  
Forbidding all selection,—or still worse,  
The will suggests a double-minded course,  
And influences contrary, unite,           255  
To hide a steady purpose out of sight.

But Reason enters and her throne ascends,  
And by her stern rebuke the scene amends.  
The thoughts are marshall'd, and a theme proclaim'd,  
And to one purpose all the forces aimed. 260  
Anon, the Virtues carefully survey,  
The thoughts in order,—ranged in just array :  
Whilst Knowledge with her grateful store appears,  
Misgivings to dispel and boding fears !  
And Language as a minstrel, wakes his lyre, 265  
All nature's harmonies to re-inspire.  
The empress Reason straight her throne resumes,  
And waves her sceptre o'er her vassall'd plumes :  
The troops adjusted, all in silence stand,  
Submissive to her absolute command, 270

Awaiting to be harnessed to the pen—  
As ministrants of good, to earnest-thoughted men.

XVII.

Yes, there is grandeur in the enterprise  
Of authors, when their gen'rous thoughts and wise  
Conspire to cherish in the human breast, 275  
Things true and noble,—such as make men blest,  
And nurture all the virtues here below,  
That reign in human hearts ;—such only flow  
From lofty souls. The men who till the earth,  
And plant and reap—hold not of equal worth, 280  
With these purveyors of the mind's rich food,  
Who find their guerdon in dispensing good.  
Oh yield them due respect : for cruel he,  
Who takes the honey and yet spurns the bee!

## XVIII.

Now tell! observant-muse,—what are the wants  
Of earthly sort for which thy nature pants? [285  
(If aught on earth can raise the soaring mind)  
—Say with what charm thou wouldst thy temples  
bind.

“First, with God’s blessing, grant the happy mean  
’Twixt poverty and wealth—a mind serene, 290  
Nor yet too sensitive—with vision clear,  
And promptitude to act life’s duties here :”  
These, and should Heaven grant a healthy frame,  
A vessel not too weakly for its flame ;  
Continue, too, a friend to taste with me, 295  
That sum of heartfelt bliss—serenity  
And the felt smile of God,—superior then,  
I hail the triumphs of THE SIMPLE PEN !”

# **THE AUTHOR.**

## **BOOK III.**



"Literature is the expression of human progress, the index of civilization. Its ubiquitous spirit visits every region of thought, draws its influence from every department of knowledge, and selecting the choicest productions of every age and place, presents to mankind, as in a mirror, the grand result of their own doings."

—FRANKLAND'S OUTLINES OF LITERARY CULTURE.

"As water, whether falling from the dew of heaven, or rising from the springs of the earth, is easily scattered and lost in the ground, except it be collected into some *receptacles*, where it may by union and congregation into one body comfort and sustain itself; for that purpose the industry of man hath invented conduits, cisterns, and pools, and beautified them with divers accomplishments, as well of magnificence and state, as of use and necessity: so this most excellent *liquor of knowledge* whether it distil from a divine inspiration, or spring from the senses, would soon perish and vanish, if it were not conserved in *Books, Traditions, Conferences*, and in places purposely designed to that end."—LORD BACON.

"Authors, though often themselves personally unseen, unheard, and unconscious of their all-powerful, all-prevalent control, are in reality the principal movers and moderators, the primary guides and governors of society in all its circles, social and public."—DR. HENRY EDWARDS.

## THE AUTHOR.

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"He that made us with such large discourse,  
Looking before and after, gave us not  
That capability and god-like reason  
To fust in us unused."

SHAKESPEARE.

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## BOOK III.

### I.

To wish is vain : action becomes the wise ;  
A good design too oft in wishing dies.  
Thus self admonished, I resume my strain,  
And touch the Author's portraiture again.

As when a jaded horse resumes the race, 5  
Stiff with repose, he starts with ambling pace,

So feels the poet who withholds too long  
The volant numbers of his chosen song.  
Hence, bound aloft, my muse, and preen thy wings,  
The lark should prompt thee, mounting while he  
'Tis not to dally on enchanted ground, [sings! 10  
With pride elate, enamoured of a sound,  
That I this tuneful task prolong. My aim  
Takes higher flight,—the patriot's noble flame,  
To emulate high service to my kind, 15  
And weave a wreath to consecrated mind.

## II.

A written thought may prove immortal seed,  
A tree of knowledge, or a loathesome weed;  
For moral landscapes show in black and white,  
As authors in their avocations write. 20

As healthy air invigorates the ground,  
Nations are blest when virtuous pens abound ;  
But oh the curse which hangs upon the pen,  
When devils for their scribes have thinking men !

## III.

Down the far vista of the silent past,           25  
Let retrospection's eye its vision cast,  
And number all the pens that ever writ,  
And all the heads that have supplied the wit,  
That learning on her ostentatious page,  
Has heaped in myriad tomes from age to age. 30  
Masses of learnèd lore as mountains rise,  
And picture knowledge blending with the skies.  
But what avails the mighty aggregate,  
Weighed in the scales that maketh small or great ?

—I will not dare propound : the great last day, 35  
Will haply tell, when pens are past away.  
The present in the future must repose,  
And the great day itself alone disclose !

## IV.

Resistless in the hands of lettered men,  
How variously hath moved the simple pen ! [bright,  
Romance hath nought more strange to show, or  
Than the fair visions it has touch'd with light ;  
And Sorrow's pencil ne'er hath pictured grief,  
More exquisite for tears to give relief,  
Than pens supply : by many a ruthless tale, 45  
Of souls oppressed, making the good man pale !

## V.

There are more felons than are pent in jails,  
Whose shameless turpitude high Heav'n assails ;

Who imp their master in his garb of light,  
If haply they may win a proselyte ; 50  
Or plant a dagger in a mortal's breast :  
They steal like spirits on a work unblest.  
Nor less deem such who hold the venal quill,  
Who for a bribe will scrawl whate'er you will.  
Fair syllables, oft hide a treach'rous league 55  
Of stealthy spirits, bent upon intrigue,  
And deeds of secret death ;—such is the pen,  
Which envy fires, when writing of good men.  
The vision is before me ; I behold, 74  
By touch of pencraft, treasons manifold— 60  
The carnival of fools—the reign of death,  
Whose atmosphere is the volcano's breath.

Into their secret ask no further light,  
Each skulking sland'rer shuns thy jealous sight!

## VI.

I pity those who write alone for bread : 65  
Compell'd to write what likeliest will be read !  
Who pamper public taste, though at the cost  
Of conscience sear'd and reputation lost.  
As stagnant waters taint the air around,  
Themselves corrupt, no health in such is found.  
—Mourn all the muses of this writing age, [70  
And frown away the lettered sacrilege !

## VII.

Behold, within the circle of the pen,  
World within world enclosed : of things and men.  
What busy life, in silence here portrayed, 75  
Starts from each written leaf ! in light or shade !

Here, to the mind where quick preception springs,  
Words become pictures, and ideas things,  
And thoughts, fast rising, in procession seem  
To people airy space, as in a dream. 80

## VIII.

Authors o'er readers hold a kingly sway,  
Whose bounds are not confined by common day.  
Too oft, alas ! they reign as despots reign,  
O'er seeming freemen, whilst with secret chain,  
They but inveigle into mazes dire, 85  
O'er hidden mines, surcharged with latent fire.  
Exacting tribute thus,—avaunt such kings,  
Their presence augurs blight, where verdure never  
springs !

## IX.

Genius\* is instinct in the breast it fires ;  
Dependent not on man—'tis God inspires. 90

\* See Note H.



It permeates unwill'd the mental frame,  
And yields within itself the seeds of fame,  
A wondrous pow'r to do some wond'rous thing,  
To bless or curse mankind,—to soothe or sting.  
To sketch aright this wonder-working spell, 95  
Requires a language of its own to tell,—  
And aye a tongue of genius, to reveal,  
What genius in its secret depths may feel;  
The oft-returning intellectual glow, [100  
Which fans with grateful sense the fevered brow,  
In the warm moments when suggestions rise,  
Thickly as stars that glitter in the skies ;  
Those inspirations which themselves renew,  
That rise spontaneous as the silent dew,

On countless subjects, germinating rife,      105  
The thoughts all verdant with perennial life.

## X.

High on some rocky cliff, the eagle rears  
His airy tent, a domicile for years ;  
O'erlooking wide expanse in lonely pride,  
The peopled earth and ocean's booming tide ; 110  
With naught familiar but the great, the vast,—  
Communing only with the mountain-blast,  
The sun unwasted by the stream of years,  
Or stars, or clouds, all deemed but meet compeers.  
So Byron, eagle-like, reared high his throne, 115  
Ambitious to be highest and alone.  
Byron, thou master of the art of rhymes,  
The haughtiest genius in ambitious times,

Thy mem'ry wakes a note of mournful string,  
In him who now would fain thy honours sing. 120  
Bright was the flame which burnt within thy breast,  
A flame uneasy, which could never rest.  
Alas it burnt too wildly, and beguiled  
Unwary readers, till on sin they smiled.  
The light'ning's red excentric course portrays 125  
The path thou travell'dst in thy mortal days.  
'Twas luminous and grand beyond compare,  
Yet wing'd with death ! Who would such glory  
—And such is genius when allied to vice ; [share ?  
'Tis in its use where all its glory lies ! 130

## XI.

Books\* are the mirror-lights of passing Time,  
Reflections of its virtues and its crime.

\* See Note I. by Thomas Carlyle.

Who has not felt some book's enchanting power,  
In the still moments of the reading hour,  
When all secluded from earth's busy strife, 135  
The page evokes the scenes of bygone life !  
E'en now, as though by photographic light,  
Earth's histories are limn'd in black and white,  
And generations yet to come shall see  
The present age in lettered pageantry ; 140  
And, 'midst the tempests which around are hurled,  
England shall stand, the light-house of the world !

## XII.

England, my country ! take on God thy hold,  
Nor place thy trust in vaunted arms or gold.  
With Him are all earth's shields, be not afraid ;  
In Him be all thy ammunition laid. [145

Let clarion-war be heard from thee no more,  
But plant the written Word on ev'ry shore ;  
So shall our God establish Britain's throne,  
And war be buried with her Wellington !      150  
—Nor deal the muse too harshly with that name,  
'Twas not himself he sought, but Albion's fame !

## XIII.

Come many-minded muse, thy thoughts declare,  
And usher forth the bookish solitaire.  
Yonder he sits, his table close besides,\*      155  
Poring on what an author now provides.  
Mark well his face ; as some reflective glass,  
It mirrors all the lights within, which pass,

\* In this paragraph the writer acknowledges many poetical suggestions, from an eloquent essay which appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1849.

Fast as his thoughts take shape. Behold, his brow  
Bespeaks emotions that are stirring now ; 160  
Calm or perturbed, as 'neath some spirit's glance,  
He yields his intellect in thoughtful trance.  
That countenance serene anon survey ;  
Methinks it now depicts progressive day ;  
As mists disperse before the rising sun, 165  
Illusions are departing one by one,  
Interior light illuminates his face,  
And gives to all the man a cheerful grace.  
Again a change. In moodiness he sits ;  
His eyes are restless, and attention flits 170  
Discursively : as though stern conscience held  
A parley with the book,—not lightly quelled :

At length o'ercome, by sophistry betrayed,  
The mind's foundations seem in ruins laid,  
And desolation as a fiend presides, 175  
In mockery. What now that soul betides!  
—Such might have authors, with the powerful quill,  
As they shall dare their mission to fulfil! \*

## XIV.

Prism-like my theme, which way soe'er you turn  
New colours rise,—and aspirations burn. 180  
Now warms my purpose with renewed desire,  
The author's proper mission to inspire.  
What shall I utter to unfold the way?  
Nor emulate a light that leads astray!  
Such power I vaunt not, as a thing possess, 185  
Spontaneous in myself,—a worm at best;

\* See Note J. by Dr. Southey.

What little light I show, from Him I draw,  
Whose fiat formed the sun, and gives to light its  
law !

## XV.

Would that the pen were deemed a sacred thing,  
Nor soil'd one feather of the muse's wing ;   190  
So would the Author's mission be revered,  
By all that goodness in her path has cheered ;  
With each attendant virtue richly graced,  
Inspired by wisdom and adorned by taste.

The author's high vocation is to raise   195  
The moral tone of life where'er he strays ;  
With pen in hand to pioneer his way,  
Through twilight shades to unobstructed day ;  
To leave in human hearts some radiant trace,  
Wherever subject-readers yield him place.   200



He that aspires th' exalted chair to fill,  
Should weigh his knowledge, purposes, and skill ;  
Nor venture on an enterprise so bold,  
Without the meet equipments, manifold,—  
A mind, proportioned to the times he sees, 205  
A heart, alive to human sympathies,  
A pen, obedient to the impulse given,  
By conscience led, and by the smile of heaven.

## XVI.

Oh, ye who venture on the enterprise,  
By foresight and by study be ye wise ; 210  
Quick to perceive, and ready to improve  
The tendencies of life, which round you move.  
Be panoplied with truth, whate'er you write,  
Nor let one falsehood mar what you indite ;

Your mental stores transcribe, and seek alone, 215  
 To give the thoughts you fairly call your own,—  
 The world eschews the cuckoo-notes of men,  
 Repeating stale ideas, ever and again.

XVII.

Great epochs rouse the perspicacious few, [220  
 'Tis hence the march of progress starts anew : \*  
 As friendly beacons on some height sublime,  
 Such eras shine as lights to far-off time :  
 'Tis hence historic lessons oft are caught,  
 And writing seers beget an age of thought.

XVIII.

'Tis deep philosophy to mark the ties 225  
 Which bind the thought in human sympathies :

\* See Note K. by T. B. Browne, Esq.

To note that something which affects all minds,  
Which as a pleasant face sure favour finds :  
Which gives some silent book its life of life,  
Its quick'ning charms, despite of critic strife. 230  
Say, what is that ? methinks, each author craves,  
Which gives a passport o'er time's stormy waves !  
The muse is short in the response she gives,  
Yet, list the word—'tis Nature only lives!  
Nature, mysterious word, and what art thou ? 235  
Oh speak and let thy earnest vot'ry know,  
Oh let thy presence to my theme suggest  
Immortal thoughts, immortally exprest,  
Now bring thy glorious vision to my sight,  
Apparelled in thy own suggestive light ;      240

## XIX.

It comes ! it comes !—majestic forms arise !  
Time's mystic cycles move before my eyes,  
Creation's landscape, picturesque and grand,  
Reveals itself complete,—divinely plann'd :  
Around each scene, associations cling,           245  
To lift us up on intellectual wing,  
All forms, all shapes, all colors to the mind,  
Read as an alphabet to be combined,  
And, reconstructed in some author's brain,  
May be revived, and live in print again !       250  
Thus all-adapting nature, be it seen,  
Thy types are ever new,—and ever green.\*  
By apt reflection and authorial skill,  
They still illustrate, and enkindle still,

\* See Appendix, Note L.

The thoughts that live, the words that never die,  
And give to books their immortality. [255  
Thus read your fates ! aspirants of the pen !  
Nature alone embalms the thoughts of men !  
Fashions decay :—mere novelty is trite,  
Be true to nature, or ye need not write ; 260  
If nature breathes not in the tones you give,  
All, all, is false,—no echo will survive !

## XX.

As wrinkled age attired in youthful dress,  
Betrays at once its own unloveliness,  
So little thoughts, in great and sounding words,  
Subject of laughter to the grave affords. [265  
When will the age of affectation pass,  
And things be only viewed through nature's glass ?

'Tis distant yet ! e'en light must be refined,  
By skilful strokes,—to suit forsooth the blind. 270

Who does not love the unaffected grace,  
Which beams conspicuous in an artless face ?  
Nor less in letters do men love the clear ;  
Where mist abounds—suspicion should be near !

## XXI.

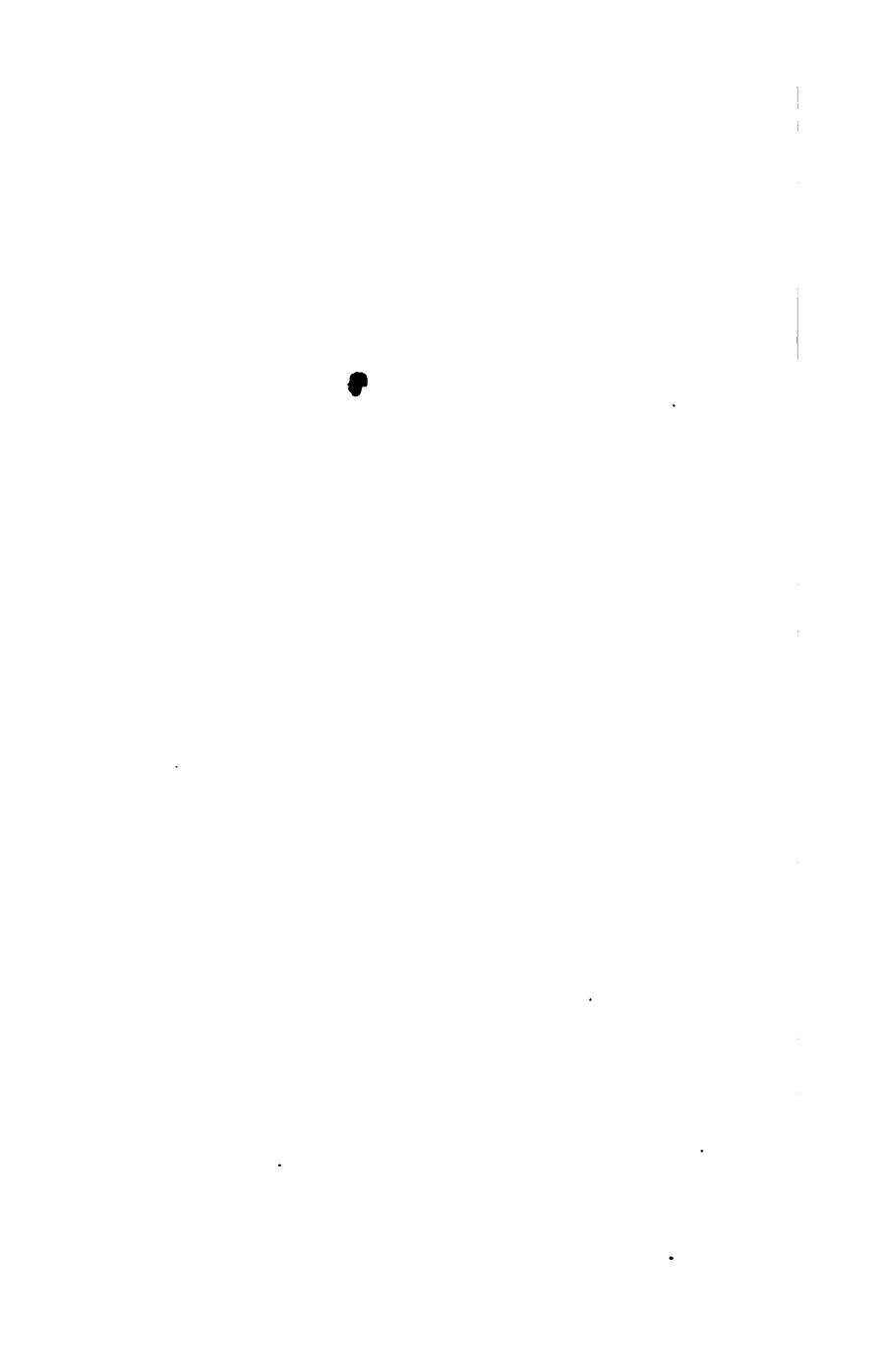
It is the fashion to admire the strange : 275  
To laud up authors who in dream-land range,  
Whose thoughts, high tow'ring in the realms of air,  
Break off abrupt,—and leave poor stragglers there,  
The ear regaled and soothed with son'rous airs :  
Meanwhile, the hungry mind on leanness fares ;  
To such a pass, is German thought displayed.  
Oh for the light of knowledge—not its shade !

## XXII.

Yon solemn mausoleum of the *dead* !  
Whose books survive,—the library unread !  
Invites the tribute of a passing sigh : 285  
Ye sad memorials of a race gone by !  
Dumb monitors ye are, that touch the heart,  
And leave me musing with oppressive smart.  
As lands all waste, rugged and cultureless,  
No longing eyes desire your leaves to bless ; 290  
All loveless and unsocial ye appear,  
And all repulsed, the world denies a tear !  
Wasteful of powers for other ends design'd,  
Ye are as learnèd dust, or, cobwebs of the mind.  
Not all are such. Some hidden for a while, 295  
As seeds too deeply buried in the soil,

Shall bear their fruitage in an afterage,  
Rescued by times more ripe—from vassalage.  
As stars reveal themselves when clouds pass by,  
So shall these 'merge from dark obscurity! 300  
As summer verdure, lost in winter's night,  
These shall revive, and bless returning light!





# THE AUTHOR.

## BOOK IV.

“The end of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection.”—MILTON.

“True eloquence I find to be none, but the serious and hearty love of truth ; and that whose mind soever is fully possessed with a fervent desire to know good things, and with the dearest charity to infuse the knowledge of them into others, when such a man would speak, his word (by what I can express) like so many nimble and airy servitors, trip about him at command, and in well-ordered files, as he would wish, fall aptly into their own places.”—IBID.

## THE AUTHOR.

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A rational repast ;—  
Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,  
A military discipline of thought,  
To foil temptation in the doubtful field ;  
And ever-waking ardour for the right :  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Naught that is right think little ; \* \* \*  
What reason bids, God bids ; by his command  
How aggrandised the smallest thing we do !  
—YOUNG.

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## BOOK IV.

### I.

When shall the ministry of pens fulfil  
The high requirements of our Maker's will ?  
The scroll of prophecy stands wide unfurled,  
To beckon on the progress of the world :  
Thus quicken'd by an impetus sublime,                   5  
Let beauteous thoughts as rainbows arch o'er time !

## II.

“ Of making many books there is no end ;  
Where must this mighty flood of letters tend !  
I read a moral on the flowing stream,  
Beyond the impress of a passing dream,— 10  
The tide of letters yet will wider grow,  
And speak the mind’s bright progress in its flow.  
Vast regions yet unbroke, of fallow mind,  
Await the impulse of the taste refined !

## III.

As some conspicuous lamp, uplifted high, 15  
The Gospel radiates brightly in the sky,  
With promise of new light to distant lands,  
To disenthral the mind from heathen bands.  
Hail to the light ! Ye nations, echo—hail !  
Ye dark recesses, to the sun unveil, 20

And ev'ry living fibre shall renew  
Its pulse, with vigour harmonizing true :  
Nor less the mind,—with renovated force,  
New thoughts pellucid shall track out their course,  
To irrigate a wilderness erewhile, 25  
And bid wide sterile wastes, as summer Edens  
smile !

## IV.

Haste glorious day, the sabbath of all time !  
When knowledge shall attain its destined prime.  
As mountains in the distance tipt with light,  
The glad perspective fills my raptured sight,—30  
Wide space is jubilant with choral songs,  
And nature's self awakes her myriad tongues !

## V.

The heart exults some author to peruse,  
Whose labours augur not a trifling muse,\* [35  
Whose book has power to germinate new thought;  
Yea, more—which re-reflection loves to quote :  
That treads no beaten path, but strikes out new,  
Whose shining track the virtuous will pursue.

Oh might these lines evoke some burning one,  
Some trembling star, a radiant course to run ! 40  
If such bend o'er my page, oh now unbind  
Thy struggling thoughts, to stimulate mankind  
To some good purpose which inflames thy breast,  
Nor shall thy gen'rous thoughts leave thee unblest.

## VI.

Readers are panting for some new delight : 45

\* See Note M. by James Montgomery.

What next shall captivate the longing sight ?  
The author to his brain-work must repair,  
And start the lion from his hidden lair.

To hold the mind in fetters is in vain ;  
The bow though tightly strung will start again.<sup>50</sup>  
Up, up ! ye authors to your purpose rise,  
And with accordant music wake the skies ;  
The pausing air is resonant and clear,  
Give forth such strains as latest times may hear,  
Sweet harmony—as sound of running streams <sup>55</sup>  
Kissed by the winds ;—evoke ye thus, new  
themes !

## VII.

I seek a theme :—some would-be author cries ;  
Nor be distrest,—philosophy replies,—



Take up the news. There ye will surely find  
The stirring, heaving, thought-pulse of mankind;  
And, if thy heart beat truly to thy kin, [60  
Moved to its depths, thy sympathies within  
Shall wake,—and coil fresh tendril-nerves of  
thought,  
Round some apt subject which thy soul hath  
caught;  
Whilst man's concerns, his destiny and aims, 65  
Will be the subject that thy mind inflames.  
Then, to thy wish evolve thy heart's desire,  
And charge thy book with thought's electric fire,  
—Nor fear, fit audience though but few to find,  
To cheer th' ascending progress of thy mind! 70

## VIII.

Yet weigh thy mission,—and be slow to print,  
Lest thine should only prove a spurious mint.  
The Public is forsooth a saucy dame,  
A loud disputer of pretentious fame.  
With spectacles high-lifted on her brow,       75  
Her tongue runs glibly, as her friends allow ;  
She may be wrong—still, quick in her replies,  
She never will distrust her long-tried eyes.  
Talk as she talks, and she will not dispute,—  
You may be right and she will yield your suit.80

Thus if you seek her ladyship to please,  
Suit but your posture, and you win with ease :  
Meanwhile review thy plea, distrust thy skill,  
And make of our advice—just what you will.

## IX.

Not so the bard : he cannot be content, 85  
O'er musty print for ever to be pent ;  
The veriest sprite, he scans creation through,  
To hive up thoughts, as bees their honey-dew.  
Yon dome ethereal, exquisitely light,  
Self-poised, rejoices his enraptured sight ; 90  
And fertile beauty spreads beneath his feet  
Enamelled verdure, with rich odours sweet,  
Refreshing and refreshed with lucent streams,  
Whose dimpling surface with fresh brightness  
gleams,  
Flashing the sun, or varying with the sky, 95  
Reflecting evening lights, each twinkling eye  
Wakeful like his, to drink the spreading scene,  
Without a darkling cloud to intervene.

## X.

Beyond,—his mind dilates, in wonder lost,  
O'er bolder settings forth—expanse embost 100  
With giant-mountains,—forests waving high,  
Touch'd by the winds to sylvan minstrelsy.  
And the wide deep with music in its roar,  
Speaks to his mind of many a fruitful shore ;  
Of lands all rich with pearls, and gems, and gold,  
Fairer than aught that language ever told. [105  
Thus to his spirit, borne on fragrant air,  
God's world is full of pictures, good and fair,  
And founts of inspiration endless rise,  
The garden of his thoughts to fertilize. 110  
So, as a skill'd musician by his touch  
Some sleeping instrument awakes, e'en such

Are poets, who from olden truths evoke  
Ideas rare, by some new master stroke  
Of thought applied,—they thus from heaven are  
sent, 115  
To give to sterile minds replenishment !

## XL

There is a book, of all on earth possest,  
Replete with knowledge, highest and the best :  
Book of all books,—blest orb of light divine,  
On whose broad disk, celestial glories shine 120  
With vivifying ray : oh lend a look,  
Ye who would idolize a written book !  
But chiefly ye, aspiring scribes, revere  
The treasured beams, illuminations clear, [125  
Which from this fount of life receive their birth,  
And start your orbits hence, to gladden earth.

Ye then shall shine, refreshing to the sight,  
 A race ennobled,—ministers of light,—  
 As spots of brightness in a world of shade,  
 Peering through darkness, which man's sin hath  
                     made! 130

XII.

“How beautiful upon the mountains,” they  
 Who herald forth the truthful beams of day  
 Celestial; whose bright efflux from on high,  
 Decends to gladden our mortality.  
 Prophets and seers, in olden times who wrote,<sup>135</sup>  
 Adown the slopes of time this shrine have brought;  
 —Oh happy they who love this golden shrine,  
 Who love it as the oracle divine

## XIII.

Readers are pupils to the books they read :  
They choose their teachers as their passions lead.  
Oft lightly starts acquaintance with a book :[140  
Some speechless impulse moves us to a look,  
By taste, or novelty, or fancy drawn,  
As knowledge or excitement leads us on.  
But who are they who teach?—the Press replies,  
Unnumbered these, the foolish and the wise,[145  
Wordsmen and egotists of ev'ry grade,  
Tricksters and empirics of ev'ry shade ;  
Fine sentimental driv'lers for the vain,  
Or ribald satirists for tastes profane. 150  
Such act the literary harlequin,  
Their charter freedom,—and a lawless pen.

The wise, too few ! more soberly will write :  
 They toil to ope new avenues of light.  
 In stature taller than the age they see,                      155  
 They climb the mount of immortality.  
 Such are not straws upon life's surging wave ;  
 But as rich freighted vessels, trim and brave,  
 With treasure laden for the wants of time,  
 They deal with bounteous hand their gifts sublime !  
 Sages like these may well afford to wait                      [160  
 The wise man's suffrage, of an after date.  
 Their home is not the present : other skies  
 Shall haply smile upon their destinies,  
 And rolling centuries repeat their name                      165  
 As candidates for everlasting fame.



## XIV.

'Neath secret causes mightiest agents lurk,  
Since thought and knowledge never cease to work.  
Though poor his lot, and unobserved his fate,  
An unseen author may direct the state;      170  
And great is he who shines with patriot-pen,  
A brother to the brotherhood of men.

## XV.

And work abounds for such, for ages hence,—  
Whose books are tongues of health and vig'rous  
That evil may not always poison good, [sense ;  
Nor man be reft of wholesome mental food.  
Too thickly hangs the cloud of mental night ;  
Yet faith beholds the darkness edged with light,

—The dawn is near; the rising day begun  
Shall see a brightness, brighter than the sun; 180  
For God shall be acknowledged as the Light,  
The mind's Shekinah—wise and infinite!

## XVI.

The word hath passed—and still the sound  
remains,  
O'er earth's tall mountain's and her spreading  
plains,  
“Woe to the souls which lead mankind astray,\*  
That call good evil, and the darkness day.” [185  
Hear it, ye men who dip your pens in ink,  
Nor dare the gracious beams of truth to blink. †

\* Isaiah v. 20. † See Note N: from Rev. G. Gilfillan.

## XVII.

Oh for that moment of surpassing joy,  
When, disencumbered of the mind's alloy,   190  
All prejudice apart, the soul shall rise  
To the pure ether of her native skies ;  
When the mind's eye, in its excursive flight,  
Shall range the boundless theatre of light ;  
As if to bright existence newly born,       195  
And from the womb of dark oblivion torn,  
And cast on earth,—to sow life's little space,  
With deeds befitting an immortal race.  
Alas, none yet have reached the state so fair ;  
Oppressive mists of error dull the air,       200  
And man must struggle as against a foe,  
With the felt darkness which beclouds him so !

XVIII.

The man that farthest sees,—invites the light,  
And none, than he, distrusteth more his sight :  
He knows full well each passion bears its hue, 205  
—And lends its foil to intercept the true.  
So must sage authors ev'ry aspect scan,  
Ere they presume to teach their brother man.

The sanguine sees too much, and magnifies  
The things presented to his wond'ring eyes :— 210  
The cold phlegmatic sceptically sees  
The very light, and doubts realities :  
'Tis thus the standpoint which controls the view,  
That speaks each bold dictator false or true !

XIX.

I meditate new worlds of thought unsealed, 215  
As landscapes waiting light to be revealed,

In morning's radiancy : blest may they rise,  
To greet the vision of expectant eyes.  
And such are books, which prompt mankind to  
prove [220  
The light of knowledge, and the warmth of love ;  
Where embryo deeds reside in thoughts well told,  
To kindle goodness, and inform the bold :  
And pens are strong to vindicate the free,—  
And genius mightier proves, than fierce artillery!

Guides and interpreters of human thought,<sup>225</sup>  
 Aspire and seize the vantage ground ye ought;  
 Ascend reflection's altitude serene,  
 And wide survey the intellectual scene ;  
 Thought's empire see, interminably far,  
 With here and there an intellectual star.      230

In vision further pierce and seek to gauge ;  
Your depth of influence on the passing age ;  
As undulating on the tide of life,  
Your words perform their mission—death or life !  
Conservators of thought, aspire, aspire !     235  
And let your written mind proclaim your fire  
Inspired by heaven. Your sacred purpose show,  
Truth to dispense, and bid the virtues glow,  
Expand the wings of language,\*—and unfold  
Transparent thought, in words transparent told :  
Do battle with the wrong, and aid the right,[240  
And flash along your path celestial light.  
† By things of good report, the just, the pure,  
The lovely, and the true, all hearts allure,

\* See Note O. by the late R. W. Hamilton.

† Phillipians, iv. 8.

—Think of these things, and in your fullness, write,  
So shall your mission terminate in light. [245  
Were authors such ! the muse not vainly sings,  
But asks for space to spread her brooding wings !

## XXI.

Yet what avails the blast o'er ages blown,  
From the proud trumpet of this earth's renown. 250  
Light as the foam which crests the rolling wave,  
Or silv'ry cloud that skirts the blue concave,  
The unsubstantial glory must decay,  
And as some beauteous phantom pass away.

Oh when at last, time's issues are unroll'd,  
And the great balance-sheet of life is told,  
Then, must each son of wisdom stand the test,  
And happy he, whose book shall leave him blest !